GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:49
ANSWERED ON:23.11.2009
REVIEW OF BROADBAND POLICY
Rao Shri Nama Nageswara

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to review the broadband policy to address the issues of high cost for broadband penetration and poor network operations by the telecom service providers in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to promote growth of broadband penetration in the country?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI A. RAJA)

(a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT TO BE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE LOK SABHA IN RESPECT OF PARTS (a) TO (c) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 49 FOR 23RD NOVEMBER, 2009 REGARDING "REVIEW OF BROADBAND POLICY".

(a) No Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) For promoting the growth of broadband, the steps taken/being taken by the Government inter-alia are as under:

A large programme of deployment of wireless broadband using broadband wireless access for providing last mile connectivity is being implemented by BSNL. Under this project it has been planned to provide wireless broadband connectivity to 1000 rural blocks through WiMAX at a cost of Rs.225 crores, of which Department of Information Technology is providing Rs.160 crores. These 1000 base stations will provide broadband coverage to about 11,500 rural Common Service Centers (CSCs) for e-governance applications.

Further, it is proposed to provide wireless broadband connectivity to about 5000 rural blocks through WiMAX under Phase-II of this project at a cost of Rs.1415 crores. These 5000 base stations will provide broadband connectivity to about 50,000 rural CSCs in this phase. This project is also being supported by Department of Information Technology with a funding of Rs.550 crores.

Indian Telegraph Act 1885 has been amended to enable provision of USOF support for broadband connectivity to rural and remote areas.

An agreement has been signed by USOF with BSNL for providing wire-line broadband connections in and around 28,000 villages/rural locations over a period of 5-years, i.e., by 2014. The subsidy disbursement is for broadband connections, Customers Premises Equipment (CPE), computer/computing devices, setting up of kiosks for public access to broadband services. The estimated subsidy flow is Rs. 1500 crores.